

# School Audit Executive Summary

## North Drive Middle School

12/10/2006 - 12/15/2006

Mike Beck, Principal

### Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted a scholastic review of North Drive Middle School during the period of 12/10/2006 - 12/15/2006. This school's last combined accountability index was 62.3 and its classification was Assistance Level 2. Here are the most relevant facts and next step recommendations from the review.

### School Deficiencies and Next Steps

<b>1. Deficiency</b>	<b>School leadership and staff have not ensured a culture of high expectations.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	Multicultural education should be an integral element throughout the school and its programs. The principal should ensure that all staff recognize their professional role in student failures, as well as successes, and instill the belief that all students can learn at high levels. Equity for all students should be a priority. Staff should demonstrate high academic and consistent behavior expectations for all students. School leadership should communicate high expectations for instructional staff especially in the delivery of a rigorous and challenging curriculum. All staff should be accountable for creating a positive learning environment to ensure student academic success.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	<b>From evidence collected by Highly Skilled Educators:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially implemented <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet addressed <b>Comments:</b> Currently school leadership communicates the message and is attempting to foster an overall belief at the school that all students can learn. A recent focus has been on teaching and learning at higher levels. More frequent VPAT walkthroughs have aided in this focus. While it was a recommendation, the issue of multicultural education has not been formally addressed. There <i>is</i> a focus on all NCLB populations, but no formal training has been pursued to address these populations' needs. In an attempt to meet the need of equity for all, students, staff and community members participated in anti-bullying training done by Dr. Allan Beane during and after school. This initiative has continued throughout the school year. A more positive learning environment is evident in some classrooms.

<b>2. Deficiency</b>	<b>School leadership and staff have not ensured that instructional practices are meeting the academic needs of a diverse student population.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	School leadership should monitor to ensure best practices and differentiated instruction is provided for the diverse student population. Learning that illustrates high expectations of both content knowledge and application should be available to all students. Instructional staff should focus on effective delivery of a variety of strategies to meet the identified needs of all students. Considerations of student learning styles, multiple intelligences, brain research, cooperative learning groups, hands-on activities and learning centers should be a regular part of instruction. Teachers should use varied instructional strategies in order for all students to learn at high levels and students should be required to apply higher order thinking skills and problem solving strategies daily.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	<p><b>From evidence collected by Highly Skilled Educators:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially implemented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not yet addressed</p> <p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>There is a focus on the district Thoughtful Education initiative which has recently become more intensive. The teaching staff still need job embedded professional development on varied instructional strategies. (Currently there are pockets of varied instructional strategies occurring throughout the school.) Teachers also need continued training and reinforcement on what proficiency looks like. Discussions focused around student work do take place periodically, especially during learning check scoring sessions at team meetings.</p> <p>It is the belief of some school and district personnel that Thoughtful Education will take care of this deficiency. Monitoring of learning club meetings and strategy implementation should be intentional for this goal to be accomplished through the Thoughtful Education initiative.</p>

<b>3. Deficiency</b>	<b>School leadership and staff have not ensured students have the opportunity to demonstrate learning through multiple authentic assessments.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<p>The principal should ensure the instructional staff receive training in the effective use of teacher generated authentic classroom assessments (e.g., open response, multiple choice, on-demand, demonstrations, presentations, cooperative projects). Teachers should collaborate with students and other teachers to develop clearly defined scoring guides for skills and processes to assess what students know and are able to do to be proficient in all content areas. Teachers should intentionally design assessments that lead students to perform at proficient levels.</p> <p>School leadership and staff should review assessment data to pinpoint individual students as well as student populations that need immediate assistance and formulate a plan to maximize resources to meet identified needs. Student Performance Level Descriptors should be the backbone that unifies the multiple testing systems adopted by the school.</p>
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	<p><b>From evidence collected by Highly Skilled Educators:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially implemented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not yet addressed</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Certified school instructional staff participated in training on writing multiple choice and open response questions at different depth of knowledge levels (through Abell &amp; Atherton Educational Consultants). Follow up with individual teachers on writing assessment items, especially open response and on-demand has been completed. Discussions and embedded trainings have been completed on collaboratively developing scoring rubrics with students, but additional training is needed to fully impact student learning. It is recommended that more open response questions be administered than the minimum required by the recently adopted school council policy. Teachers are beginning to use assessments to pinpoint individual students that need immediate assistance and are starting to formulate a plan; however, this practice is not systemic.</p> <p>This deficiency needs continuous monitoring and additional job embedded professional development to become fully implemented.</p>

<b>4. Deficiency</b>	<b>School leadership is not ensuring the involvement of all stakeholders when making school decisions.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	School leadership should ensure communication is intentional and planned to make all families aware of the opportunities to become involved with the school. School leadership should consistently enforce by policy and practice implementation of regular two way communication between home and school. Initiatives should be developed for parent and community interest and involvement in the school. Stakeholders should be involved in the decision making process of the school and should include instructional staff, classified staff, parents, students and community members.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	<p><b>From evidence collected by Highly Skilled Educators:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially implemented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not yet addressed</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>The Youth Service Center continues to send monthly newsletters to stakeholder households. The school has also recently instituted an “One Call” system to help ensure that most stakeholders get pertinent information regarding school and grade-level team events (e.g., progress reports, parent-teacher conferences, missing homework). In August 2007 the school re-formed a Parent Teacher Organization and that fall held its first fall festival. The yearly PIE (Parents Involved in Education) Fair was also held at the school. The school chorus teacher organized a theatrical/social studies event that was attended by some school stakeholders and community members and received some positive media coverage.</p> <p>A food-backpack program has been discussed. School leadership and staff report that it is difficult to get parents involved for a variety of reasons, but mostly due to transportation.</p>

<b>5. Deficiency</b>	<b>Students are not ensured a rigorous, intentional and aligned curriculum.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<p>School leadership and teachers should ensure a rigorous, intentional and aligned curriculum is developed and consistently implemented in all classrooms. The district curriculum document should be revised and aligned to include Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment version 4.1, expanded and modified by the school. Teachers should be trained to use Depth of Knowledge and encouraged to include it in all classes. School leadership should continuously monitor the implementation of the curriculum to ensure student success.</p> <p>District and school leadership should initiate and facilitate in-depth discussions within and between schools for the purpose of developing smooth transitions and vertical alignment and communicate this information to all stakeholders.</p>
<b>District Action Steps to Overcoming Obstacles</b>	<p><b>From evidence collected by Highly Skilled Educators:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully implemented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially implemented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not yet addressed</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>School leadership has begun a lesson plan monitoring system that requires notation of Kentucky's <i>Core Content for Assessment</i>, version 4.1; some teachers are also noting depth of knowledge (DOK) levels, but this is not a widespread practice. School certified instructional staff was trained in writing open response and multiple choice questions at different DOK levels. Follow up on DOK levels has been provided to some grade level teams during team meetings; however, additional training on DOK is needed. Implementation and monitoring of curriculum should be focused and intentional to ensure accountability at all levels.</p> <p>District discussions and meetings have begun (with an attempt to involve stakeholder representatives from different schools) regarding curriculum alignment, mapping and building common assessments/learning checks. A district mathematics map has been completed and reading is currently being developed.</p>

## **Conclusion**

School leadership should continue to pursue professional development in the area of multicultural education. The identification of students who are behind through a “Name and Claim” initiative is in early stages and staff members continue to need parameters and guidelines. Some success is being noted. School leadership is exploring restructuring the school day for the 2008-2009 school year to include more time for reading instruction and a built-in intervention period that would be around the lunch schedule. This revised schedule should reduce the number of students in the cafeteria at any one time as well.

School leadership should continue to pursue additional professional development in the areas of varied instructional strategies and depth of knowledge. Focused, intentional monitoring of effective instruction should continue to occur through lesson plan checks and classroom observations. The school curriculum specialist should be continually utilized to model effective instructional strategies and assessments in classrooms.

A district-aligned and mapped curriculum for all content areas should be fully developed, implemented, and monitored.